

Message Text

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72

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 EA-06 CU-02 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6422

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INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMCONSUL LUANDA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, AO, BC, RH

SUBJECT: SAVIMBI IN BOTSWANA; HIGHLIGHT -- SPEECH AT UBLS

REFERENCE: GABORONE 0378

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

1. SUMMARY: DURING SAVIMBI STAY IN GABORONE HE ADDRESSED
ENTHUSIASTIC STUDENT GROUP AT GABORONE CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY
OF BOTSWANA, LESOTHO AND SWAZILAND (UBLS) ON THE EVENING
OF MARCH 18. SPEECH RECAPPED LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN ANGOLA
AND DECRIED LACK OF UNITY AMONG LIBERATION GROUPS. SAVIMBI
FAVORED NEGOTIATION OVER FIGHTING AND URGED CONTINUATION OF
RHODESIA TALKS. HE RIDICULED CRITICS OF BOTSWANA-ZAMBIA-
TANZANIA PEACE EFFORTS IN RHODESIA. HE ALSO STATED THAT
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UNITA WAS CALLED QUOTE REVISIONIST UNQUOTE BY PRC AND

SOVIET UNION BECAUSE OF ITS PEASANT ORIENTATION. HE PRESENTED GENERALLY MODERATE VIEWS, INCLUDING EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION FOR U.S. INTEREST IN ANGOLA TO CHARGE AT EARLIER RECEPTION AND NOTED GENERAL SIMILARITY OF VIEWS WITH BOTSWANA ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS IN PREDEPARTURE INTERVIEW MARCH 19. END SUMMARY.

2. HIGHLIGHT OF VISIT TO BOTSWANA BY DR. JONAS SAVIMBI WAS SPEECH TO ENTHUSIASTIC UBLS AUDIENCE ON THE EVENING OF MARCH 18, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY EMBOFF. CONSISTENT THEME OF THE SPEECH WAS THE DESIRABILITY OF NEGOTIATION -- FIGHTING SHOULD BE ABSOLUTE LAST RESORT. ALTHOUGH ARMED STRUGGLE MADE PEOPLE MORE POLITICALLY MATURE, IT HAD DESTROYED PARTS OF ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN ANGOLA: QUOTE OUR ROADS WERE BLOWN UP BY OUR OWN MINES. NOW WE NEED THOSE ROADS TO FEED OUR PEOPLE. UNQUOTE.

3. SAVIMBI RUMINATED ON MAJOR WEAKNESS OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE IN ANGOLA -- DIVISION AMONG LIBERATION GROUPS. WHILE UNITA, FNLA AND MPLA USED THEIR BULLETS ON EACH OTHER, THE PORTUGUESE WERE SAVVY. HOWEVER, WHEN THE GROUPS FINALLY UNITED, THE PORTUGUESE BECAME DEMORALIZED. THIS UNITY MUST BE MAINTAINED BECAUSE THERE IS NO WAY ANY ONE OF THE THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS COULD RULE ALONE UNDER PROVISIONAL OR PERMANENT GOVERNMENT.

4. SPEAKER BITTERLY CRITICIZED LIBERATION LEADERS WHO, DURING STRUGGLE AGAINST PORTUGUESE, STAYED OUTSIDE ANGOLA AND SENT ORDERS TO THEIR TROOPS. SUCH LEADERS MERELY WANTED TO STAY LINE TO BECOME MINISTERS.

5. SAVIMBI OUTLINED UNITA PHILOSOPHY THAT VIEWED THE PEASANT AS BACKBONE OF ANTI-PORTUGUESE STRUGGLE. PEASANTS HAD THEIR OWN FOOD, ETC. WHILE URBAN WORKERS COULD NOT BE ORGANIZED SAFELY BY UNITA. HE SAID THAT QUOTE OUR CHINESE AND RUSSIAN FRIENDS CRITICIZED US AS REACTIONARIES FOR EMPHASIZING PEASANTS OVER WORKERS UNQUOTE. HOWEVER, HE CLAIMED, EMPHASIS ON THE PEASANT WAS RIGHT FOR ANGOLA.

6. ALTHOUGH FIGHTING WAS NECESSARY IN ANGOLA, SAVIMBI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID HE FAVORS CONTINUATION OF TALKS ON RHODESIA. HE REFERRED TO CRITICISM AT RECENT OAU MEETING OF BOTSWANA, ZAMBIA AND TANZANIA EFFORTS IN RHODESIA TALKS AND SAID: QUOTE JUST LOOK AT WHO IS DOING THE CRITICIZING; THEY ARE FAR AWAY FROM THE SITUATION. THEY WILL WAIT FOR US TO DIE AND THEN PASS A RESOLUTION. UNQUOTE. THIS COMMENT EVOKED CONSIDERABLE LAUGHTER FROM AUDIENCE. THE ARREST OF REVEREND SITHOLE BY THE SMITH GOVERNMENT WAS NOT MENTIONED

IN THE SPEECH.

7. SAVAMBI CONCLUDED ON A MODERATE NOTE. HE IDENTIFIED HUNGER, DISEASE AND IGNORANCE AS AFRICA'S GREATEST ENEMIES TODAY AND URGED STUDENTS TO HAVE COURAGE TO COMBAT THESE ENEMIES, NOT BECOME WEALTHY. HE CHIDED STUDENTS FOR UNREST AGAINST THE SYSTEM THAT GAVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY.

8. EMBOFF COMMENT: BY JUXTAPOSING AN EXPLANATION OF THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DIVISION AMONG ANGOLA LIBERATION GROUPS AND A DISCUSSION OF RHODESIAN QUESTION, SAVAMBI SUGGESTED OBLIQUE CRITICISM OF RHODESIAN GROUPS UNDER ANC UMBRELLA FOR CONTINUED SQUABBLING. HIS STATEMENT THAT CHINESE CRITICIZED UNITA ORGANIZATION OF PEASANTS IS SURPRISING IN VIEW OF CHINESE COMMUNIST EXPERIENCE AND DOCTRINE ON PEASANT STRUGGLE. ALTHOUGH HE MADE THE DISPARAGING COMMENT ABOUT THE PRC AND SOVIET UNION, NO MENTION WAS MADE OF U.S. THE SPEECH WAS NOT DEMAGOGIC OR ANTI-WHITE. SAVIMBI GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF A RELATIVELY CONSERVATIVE, STATESMANLIKE LEADER ESSENTIALLY INTERESTED IN CONCENTRATING ON PROBLEMS FACING AN INDEPENDENT ANGOLA, NOT DWELLING ON ITS LIBERATION PAST. END COMMENT.

9. IN EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE DURING RECEPTION PRECEEDING UBL'S SPEECH, SAVIMBI GAVE SAME IMPRESSION. HE MADE SEVERAL MODERATE POINTS LATER MADE IN HIS UNIVERSITY SPEECH, I.E. NEGOTIATION BETTER THAN FIGHTING, AND ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO RECOGNIZE AND EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR STATED U.S. WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST IN PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT OF ANGOLA.

10. SAVIMBI DEPARTED GABORONE MARCH 19. DURING PREDEPARTURE INTERVIEW WITH RADIO BOTSWANA, SAVIMBI AGAIN

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REITERATED SEVERAL MODERATE THEMES. HE SAID THAT HE HAD COME TO BOTSWANA TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA WITH BOTSWANA LEADERS AND EXCHANGE VIEWS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. HE SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO FIND THAT HE AND THE BOTSWANA LEADERS SHARED SIMILAR VIEWS ON THOSE DEVELOPMENTS.

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